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The Council of Seventy.

In making up statistics for the report of the work of the American Institute to be presented at the annual meeting, some interesting facts in relation to the constituency of the Guild for Professional Reading present themselves. There has not been time to study the philosophy of these facts, and to draw from them definite conclusions, but, perhaps, some of the more obvious inferences may be reached by a simple reading of the statistics given below.

Of the entire number enrolled (294) 248 are ministers. The remainder are teachers, students, and missionaries, and a few non-professional laymen.

Seventy-five per cent. of the entire number are between thirty and fifty years of age, with from five to twenty years of experience as preachers. About 20 per cent. are young ministers who have been less than five years in the field.

Sixty per cent. of the number are graduates of both college and seminary, and many of these have done graduate work in German or American universities. Twenty per cent. are graduates of *either* a college or a seminary. This leaves a small 20 per cent. who have not at one time in their lives had at least a fair equipment for work.

The following religious denominations are represented in the order given: Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, Disciples, Reformed, Cumberland Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Free Baptist, M. E. South, Southern Presbyterian, Free Methodist, United Brethren, Unitarian, Universalist, German Baptist, Pentecostal, United Evangelical, Reformed Presbyterian, Friends, Mormon.

The selection of courses is an interesting one. "The Life of Christ," 64; "The Historical and Literary Origin of the Pentateuch," 61; "Old Testament Prophecy," 59; "Christianity and Social Problems," 53; "The Preparation of Sermons," 30; "The Apostolic Church," 23; "The Psalter," 14; "The Gospel of John," 10. Twenty have not yet indicated their choice.

In the conduct of these courses fifty-eight book reviews have been prepared by forty-five different men. All but three of them are members of the Council. Six hundred and forty-six copies of these

reviews have been sent out in answer to requests from members of the Guild.

One other feature of the statistics forms an interesting study, namely, the library facilities of the average minister. Of the 233 who stated the approximate number of volumes in their possession, 4 possessed less than fifty volumes; 6 less than one hundred; 20 between one and two hundred; 31 between two and three hundred; 39 between three and four hundred; 27 between four and five hundred; 75 between five hundred and one thousand, and 35 over one thousand volumes. These numbers probably included in most cases the general family library as well as the professional books of the minister himself.

In view of the above facts we may conclude: (1) that the majority of the members are at the age when a man is flexible and can best assimilate and adjust to his environment and experience the material gained in his reading; (2) only the upper strata of ministers have been touched (What shall be done to bring the opportunity to the attention of the thousands of ministers who have neither college nor seminary training, and yet are in the field, and tied to work which prevents their attending residence institutions?); (3) no denominational barriers seem to exist; (4) there is no "faddish" interest in any one subject, but a rational selection according to individual taste and necessity; (5) a large proportion of the members are actually at work, and using the reviews provided by the Institute; (6) the library of the average minister is seldom extensive enough to afford him necessary material for the best preparation in preaching and teaching; (7) the salary of the average minister does not permit him to make large additions to his library each year; he must therefore make very careful selections along definite lines; (8) the plan of the Reading Guild, with its carefully selected and frequently revised lists, its Loan Library, and its facilities for reducing the cost of books to the minister, appears more and more needful, practical, and helpful. It is the design of the Institute to move steadily forward in this direction, announcing new courses, frequently revising old courses, and increasing the membership of the Guild as rapidly as possible.